

the high cost of pursuing a higher education. Among those millions will be young men and women who will be the first in their families to attend college. There will be inventors and innovators, businessmen and women, generals, scientists, leaders of all stripes, and, surely, future members of this body.

At the University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP) in my district, students entering school in 2007 will save \$2,300 on an average debt of \$13,800, and student entering in 2011, when the full interest rate cuts take effect, will save over \$4,400 on the same amount of debt.

These savings would mean the world to my community of El Paso and to Latino communities across the country. This is true because Hispanic students have historically borrowed less on average than other groups, a reluctance that means students are often too busy working for a paycheck to complete their degrees in a timely fashion. The six billion dollars in loan relief we are passing today will mean our kids will have the ability to borrow the money they need to finance their educations and ultimately get the jobs that will allow them prosperous lives.

What we are doing today also has broader significance. It is significant to the strength of our economy and the security of our country. If America is to compete economically with countries like China and India and fill key positions in our national security agencies, we need to start by sending more kids to college. Under current policy, financial barriers will prevent 6.4 million high school graduates from attending college and would cost our economy 12 million college-educated workers by the year 2020. This is a crisis, Madam Speaker. We need to recognize right now that the investments in education we make or choose not to make today will determine our economic future—whether or not our grandchildren and great-grandchildren have high-quality jobs.

College access is an integral part of our competitiveness and security puzzle, because we will not find the answers to the challenges we face as a nation without a well-educated and innovative workforce. The bill we are passing today will make our country a safer and a more prosperous place.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to pass this bill, and I look forward to continuing this dialogue about the importance of education for national competitiveness and security.

TRIBUTE TO ARTHUR NOZIK,
SARAH KURTZ AND JERRY OLSON

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 18, 2007

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize three researchers from the National Renewable Energy Laboratory, the premier national laboratory for renewable energy and energy efficiency research.

The American Chemical Society recently honored Arthur Nozik, a senior research fellow at NREL, with a special tribute of accomplishments in *The Journal of Physical Chemistry B*.

During the past 30 years, Dr. Nozik has earned a leading position in the fields of photoelectrochemistry, semiconductor-mol-

ecule interfaces, nanoscience and quantum size effects in semiconductors and carrier dynamics in semiconductor quantum dots and quantum wells. He has written more than 160 peer-reviewed publications, 35 book chapters and has edited or co-authored several books in these fields.

Dr. Nozik has been awarded 11 U.S. patents. He also invented a novel photochemical diode for splitting water to generate hydrogen, and the identification of several important solar photoconversion approaches using hot carrier effects, size quantization, and superlattice concepts that could, in principle, enable a leap in efficiency of solar energy conversion.

Dr. Nozik, who joined NREL in 1978, received the 2002 Energy Research Award of the Electrochemical Society. He was a senior editor of *The Journal of Physical Chemistry* from 1993–2005 and is a fellow of both the American Physical Society and the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

NREL solar energy researchers Sarah Kurtz and Jerry Olson have spent the past 20 years developing the multi-junction solar cell. These solar cells have demonstrated higher solar energy conversion efficiency than conventional silicon cells and are already the choice for most space applications. For their contributions to the field of photovoltaic energy, Kurtz and Olson have been recognized as laureates of the Dan David Prize, given by the Dan David Foundation in cooperation with Tel Aviv University and the French Ministry of Culture and Communication. They and other winners will share \$3 million in prize money.

The photovoltaics community has made tremendous progress during the last 30 years. In the past few years, the investment in concentrator systems using high-efficiency, multijunction solar cells has mushroomed. Although this investment is not yet reflected by large installations, the Dan David prize recognizes this technology for its future promise to transform energy markets.

I'm enormously proud to have NREL in my district and equally proud of the work of these three scientists.

MEDICARE PRESCRIPTION DRUG PRICE NEGOTIATION ACT OF 2007

HON. STEVEN R. ROTHMAN

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 12, 2007

Mr. ROTHMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 4, the Medicare Prescription Drug Price Negotiation Act of 2007, because we owe our seniors a drug benefit program that is accessible and affordable. I believe that this legislation brings us one step closer.

My fellow Democrats and I were outraged that the current Medicare Part D drug benefit forces many elderly beneficiaries to choose between their medication and basic needs, such as food and utilities. The health concerns of our elderly Medicare beneficiaries are urgent, and I am proud that we have now passed legislation that will arm the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services with an additional tool to address these needs.

The intent of H.R. 4 is to open a path of negotiation of drug prices to remove the burden of affordability from the shoulders of our elder-

ly. This bill should neither tie the hands of private drug plans, nor create unnecessary hurdles for the pharmaceutical companies that develop life-saving medicine. Rather, the intent is to give the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services the needed authority to effectively and efficiently offer affordable prices to seniors.

We need Medicare Part D to be a benefit, and not a burden, to our friends and neighbors who use it. The fact that these individuals could get prescription drugs cheaper through Canada, Drugstore.com, or Costco is not only a disservice to Americans who trust Medicare for the healthcare they need—it is not good public policy. Every year, premiums and drug prices rise, and seniors are forced to bear more and more of the cost of their healthcare.

However, we cannot let this bill and its provisions become the tool that kills the goose that lays the golden eggs. The United States is the international leader of pharmaceutical and medical innovation. Every year, we achieve numerous historical breakthroughs in medicine and treatment that improve the quality of life of millions of Americans, due to the research and dedication of our pharmaceutical companies and their tens of thousands of employees. It is because of American innovation that an HIV/AIDS or cancer diagnosis is no longer a death sentence; that an athlete and an amputee can be the same person; and that a child with asthma does not have to stay in after school.

Research and development are costly. Inherent in each pursuit is a great amount of risk. On average, only one out of every 10,000 possible medications successfully makes it through development and Food and Drug Administration approval. It can take more than 15 years and \$800 million to develop just one drug. Congress should not allow any public policy to move forward that would indirectly hinder innovation or advances in medicine. As we make needed improvements in the Medicare Part D plan, we must ensure that scientific advances continue. Therefore, we must balance our encouragement of competition and innovation in the private market with public health.

I believe that with H.R. 4 we are one step closer to answering the needs of our elderly. We have a real chance to provide a more accessible, affordable, and effective drug benefit to our seniors. Americans are living longer, healthier lives than ever before, and it is our duty to ensure that this trend continues.

INTRODUCTION OF THE HOME OWNERSHIP FOR AMERICA'S VETERANS ACT OF 2007

HON. SUSAN A. DAVIS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 18, 2007

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Madam Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Home Ownership for America's Veterans Act of 2007 along with my distinguished colleague from California, Congressman WALLY HERGER.

The Home Ownership for America's Veterans Act of 2007 corrects an inequity in the federal Qualified Veterans Mortgage Bonds (QVMB) program available to a number of states for the purpose of financing home loans

for veterans. Specifically, in some states, QVMBs home loan financing is only available to veterans who signed up for military duty prior to 1977.

It is time we address this inequity. Our veterans returning from Iraq and Afghanistan deserve the opportunity to purchase a home with QVMBs. Further, in our home state of California, only 4.1 percent of our veterans are eligible for a home loan through QVMB bonds.

Our legislation extends the program and opens it up to new veterans residing in California and Texas. Congress passed legislation in the 109th Congress making the home loan program available to newly discharged veterans in the other states eligible for QVMBs financing.

It is crucial that we act swiftly to give these veterans and their families the ability to purchase and own a home in California and Texas.

This legislation will benefit every state eligible for QVMBs by requiring annual adjustments to the federal bond limit indexed to the Freddie Mac Conventional Mortgage Home Price Index. A higher bond limit means California, Texas, Oregon, Wisconsin, and Alaska—the five eligible states—will have the ability to provide more of their veterans with home loans. We must keep QVMB financing compatible with national housing costs.

The Home Ownership for Veterans Act of 2007 will help our newly discharged heroes purchase homes while ensuring that state veterans' home loan programs remain viable.

Thank you very much Madam Speaker for the opportunity to introduce legislation to help veterans purchase homes and achieve the American Dream for their families.

A TRIBUTE TO AL ECHOLS, ESQ.

HON. ROBERT A. BRADY

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 18, 2007

Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, I rise to honor Al Echols, Esq., a Philadelphia legend who after serving 44 years as the executive director of North City Congress has announced his retirement.

Under the leadership of Mr. Echols, North City Congress has remained a valued institution meeting the changing needs of a changing community in North Philadelphia. During its first decade North City Congress represented a federation of neighborhood organizations committed to positive community change.

North City Congress later became a vital social service agency. Today, the agency operates two senior citizens centers that offer meals, social, recreational and cultural activities and in-home management services for the frail and home-bound. It also offers financial management and estate planning for seniors and fiscal management and technical assistance for community-based organizations.

Mr. Echols, a graduate of Virginia Union University and the Howard University Law School, marshaled his considerable acumen in the struggle to gain political power for African Americans in Philadelphia. In 1971, he was a council-at-large candidate on the Thatcher Longstreth Republican ticket in a hard fought race against Democrat Frank Rizzo.

Known for his wit, Mr. Echols is fiercely opinionated and a political sage with whom one cannot have a brief conversation. Not only does he love to explain the nuances of his points of view he punctuates his conversations with a laugh that can shake the grand mansion that houses North City Congress.

As he retires, Al Echols leaves an indelible stamp of good will, principled leadership and service.

A TRIBUTE TO LARRY SHEINGOLD

HON. JIM COSTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 18, 2007

Mr. COSTA. Madam Speaker, we rise today to recognize the retirement of Larry Sheingold after thirty-six years of service as a staff member in the California State Legislature.

Larry's years of service included ten years as an Assembly staff member and twenty-six years working for the State Senate. During his career he worked for Assembly Speakers Bob Moretti and Leo McCarthy and several State Senators including Jim Costa, Betty Kamette, Henry Mello and the current Senate President Pro Tem, Don Perata.

In addition, Larry Sheingold served on the National Conference of State Legislatures' Executive Committee from 2003–06. He is one of only nineteen legislative staff members ever to do so.

Though Larry Sheingold may be on the understated side, he has always possessed a giant intellect and is a master of campaign strategies. His advice to candidates and officeholders alike has always been keen, thoughtful and delivered with a quick wit and much humor. Larry is one of those individuals that combine a rare blend of policy expertise and astute political judgment.

Thirty-six years ago, when Larry started his career as a legislative staff member, Ronald Reagan was governor, legislative committee votes were not public and no woman had ever served in the California State Senate. During his career all that has changed and as the invitation to his retirement event stated, "The system may be working, but Larry won't be."

But to paraphrase the late British politician, Lord Salisbury, Larry Sheingold is not the type of gentleman to retire gracefully into the background.

Today, we take great pleasure in honoring, through these remarks, a good friend, a former staff member and a valued advisor, Larry Sheingold. We wish him and his wife Judy only the best of times in retirement, though that may only last until the next election cycle.

COLLEGE STUDENT RELIEF ACT OF 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. RON PAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 17, 2007

Mr. PAUL. Madam Speaker, anyone who knows a recent college graduate is well aware of the way many young people struggle to pay

their student loans. By slightly reducing the interest rate on student loans, H.R. 5, while far from perfect, will help ease this burden. A commendable feature of this bill is that, instead of placing new burdens on taxpayers, it pays for the reduction in interest rates by reducing subsidies to financial institutions. Thus, the bill does not increase the deficit, taxes, or the size or scope of government.

All-too-often, government programs, which the taxpaying public believes help lower-income Americans, actually provide government subsidies for politically powerful business interests. For example, in the student loan program under discussion today, taxpayer dollars are provided to financial institutions in return for those institutions agreeing to provide student loans under terms set by the government. By reducing subsidies for financial institutions in order to benefit recent graduates, H.R. 5 takes a step toward ensuring the student loan program actually focuses on helping students and recent graduates, instead of using taxpayer dollars for a disguised form of corporate welfare.

In addition to passing H.R. 5, Congress should also help more Americans afford college by passing my Make College Affordable Act, H.R. 193, that makes college tuition tax deductible. There has been talk of bringing legislation like H.R. 193 to the floor later this year. I hope all my colleagues—regardless of their positions on the bill before us today—can unite behind helping middle- and working-class Americans afford college by supporting my Make College Affordable Act or similar legislation.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. KEN CALVERT

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 18, 2007

Mr. CALVERT. Madam Speaker, pursuant to my leave of absence, I am submitting for the RECORD how I would have voted if I had been present earlier today, in addition to comments that I request also be entered into the RECORD.

Rollcall #34, "yea"—Motion to Adjourn, rollcall #35, "no"—Ordering the Previous Question, and rollcall #36, "no"—Agreeing to H. Res. 66.

H. Res. 66 is a closed rule that prohibits any amendments to the bill from being considered by the House. Madam Speaker, on November 14, 2006 you wrote in a Christian Science Monitor op-ed that "Democrats pledge to make this the most honest, ethical, and open Congress in history." I am deeply disappointed that past pledges for an open Congress have been broken so quickly with H. Res. 66 and other closed rules imposed by the majority. I believe the People's House operates best when legislation moves through regular order and uses our Committee process where members from both sides of the aisle have an opportunity to work together to improve legislation. Under the new "Closed-door Congress," the House has yet to consider a bill that was moved through regular order and considered by the Committee of jurisdiction. H. Res. 66 establishes the rules for considering H.R. 6, and, as a senior member of the Natural Resources Committee, I have significant